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Everglades National Park News Release

September 2, 2003
For Immediate Release
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PINE ISLAND WASTEWATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS – NO SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The National Park Service (NPS) has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Pine Island Wastewater System Improvements project. Acting Southeast Regional Director Patricia Hooks approved the FONSI based on the environmental assessment recommended by Everglades National Park Acting Superintendent John Benjamin. With the environmental assessment and associated compliance completed, improvements to the Pine Island wastewater system should begin in fall 2003.

Of the two alternatives considered in the environmental assessment, the approved action includes a number of steps to improve the wastewater system at Pine Island, a district in the park that includes the headquarters area and the Ernest P. Coe Visitor Center, the main visitor center in the park. The preferred alternative consists of installing a new centralized wastewater treatment facility and new wastewater collection/transmission system throughout the Pine Island and Headquarters developed area, with the construction of raised infiltration beds for effluent disposal. This project would be designed to meet present and future State of Florida wastewater standards.

The federally funded project will ensure an effective, efficient, and reliable wastewater treatment system that meets all federal, state, and local operational and effluent standards in an environmentally sound manner. The preferred alternative will result in minor to moderate long-term beneficial impacts to several resources, including public health and safety, hydrology and water quality, wetlands, wildlife and habitats, and vegetation.

For more information about this project or to obtain a copy of the FONSI, contact Everglades National Park at (305) 242-7700 or visit our website at <http://www.nps.gov/ever/planning>.